Dr. Katharine Field has been developing new methods for detecting microbial contamination of water for about 18 years. Her laboratory was the first to start using molecular (“DNA based”) methods for microbial source tracking. Her laboratory’s pioneering work developing markers based on uncultivated *Bacteroides* bacteria began a trend that will lead to revised water quality criteria from the US EPA, including recommendations on the use of molecular methods, PCR and qPCR, to estimate water quality, as early as fall of 2012.

Dr. Field is an associate professor of Microbiology at Oregon State University. Along with a water quality research program involving graduate and undergraduate students, she teaches several classes. She is also the Director of the BioResource Research undergraduate biosciences major, a research-based interdisciplinary major. She recently was awarded a $4.4 million grant from the USDA, part of a $40 million regional grant, to develop Bioenergy education at OSU and regionally.

She received a BA in Biology from Yale University, an MA in Biology from Boston University, and a PhD in Biology from University of Oregon, and did postdoctoral research at Indiana University.